

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

James Matzorkis
27445 Pineview Dr.
Westlake, OH 44145

State Director
20 M Street SE, ste 950
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Director Mouritson:

Hi, my name is James Matzorkis and today, I'm writing you to protest the proposed lease of over 1,000 acres of Wayne National Forest this December to oil and gas companies for horizontal drilling. This protest applies to all parcels in question, numbered ES-001, ES-002, ES-003, ES-004, and ES-005.

I realize that I do not speak fluent legalese, but our Mother the Earth is very sick. Climate change represents a rising fever threatening her capacity to support life. We are all her children. It is our responsibility to care for her during her time of need.

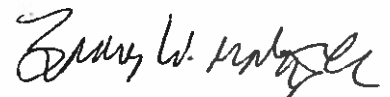
Many Ohioans take this responsibility to heart and do the best we can to monitor and limit the small pressures we exert on her in everyday life. We turn off lights, walk or bike instead of driving, hang clothes out to dry, and make green investments in everything from local food to solar panels, all to cut our personal footprints to a sustainable size. By engaging in sustainable ways of life, we demonstrate and pass along the *possibility* of a healthy relationship with nature and a survivable planet for future generations.

In the face of all that is dark about these times, it is the hope that we, as a populace, might nurse this possibility into effect that keeps us moving forward. And yet, for all the effort we put forth as individuals, if we do not, as a culture, rein in the institutionalized recklessness of the fossil fuel industry, I fear that hope may be smothered by the time generations born today grow old.

This is a very serious matter. Earth's biodiversity is at an all-time low. A glacier in Antarctica the size of Delaware broke off into the ocean earlier this year and began melting. We have witnessed hurricanes with unprecedented frequency and intensity, and earthquakes near injection wells where they've never been before. Our Mother the Earth is very sick and we are all her children. It is our responsibility to care for her during her time of need; but instead of behaving like a doctor and working to help her heal, BLM behaves like an addict itching for a snatch at her purse! During a time when we need trees more than ever to fix carbon, hold topsoil in place, provide habitat for wildlife and filter the water clean, you should be creating jobs planting thousands of them, connecting the three Wayne units with wide, green corridors. Instead, you have chosen to lease the forest for horizontal drilling, a process that would remove thousands of gallons of water from the cycle, lace it with toxic chemicals, pump it through the water table, and leave local communities to deal with radioactive dump sites and injection wells while the gas gets piped to Canada, all without the smallest shred of democratic process.

Whoever is reading this letter, I want you to know, that while it is shameful of you to have gone along with this plan so far, you still have the ability to change your mind and do the right thing. I know that it will take a great deal of courage and personal strength to change gears now, but please remember that it really is worth it. Your integrity is worth it, the health of our people and posterity is worth it, and the beautiful and delicate ecosystems in Wayne Forest are worth it. I thank you for reading and wish you good day.

Sincerely,



James Matzorkis

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